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Panchayati Raj

NOVEMBER 1960

PANCHAYATI RAJ

(Incorporating Gram Sevak)

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MESSAGE

New Delhi,
October 13, 1960.

COOPERATIVES have grown. Cooperation is yet to grow. If there is cooperation, one hardly needs a registration. The Indian family is the oldest and the grandest living cooperative in action. For its growth, it requires no certificate either from Government or from the community. The family is taken for granted. Man and woman combine on their own free choice. They raise a family of whom they are fond. Cooperation grows but as a logical course. Thus alone could life survive in India with its vitality and culture nearly intact despite the ravages of centuries.

Cooperation is the law of the universe. Cooperation is also the law of life. When cooperation is so recognised, it should face no serious problem. But when it is taken as the means for getting ten or more times the share capital with no rigid obligation for repayment, we begin to face all manner of complications. No wonder, cooperatives begin to clamour more for participation by Government in the share capital, for subsidies and a higher ratio of loan from the Reserve Bank *vis-a-vis* the share of the society. No wonder, the wicked in society, both active and potential, vie with each other in the gold rush. Cooperatives have been in existence in India for more than fifty years. But cooperation is yet to grow into a code of life.

We are pledged to the building of a Socialist society in India. Socialism means help by the strong to the weak, so that the weakest link in the chain could be almost as strong as the strongest one. Socialism means equality of opportunity for the weak and the strong alike. It means a common sharing of the bounties by all members of the community. Socialism cannot be built by the private sector. Private sector by definition and tradition in India means the sector for private profit. It means strength to the individual. Community comes in as incidental to the growth of the individual. Even the humanitarian businessman is eager to make life for others safer to or in the other world than in this one. Socialism cannot be ushered in by the Public sector either. Public sector means in practice the control and the ownership of the economy by the State. The State sector in which individuals or groups have no free existence grows soon to be a giant machine empty in content and devoid of the spirit of life.

Socialism demands co-existence of the individual and the society both, one reinforcing the other. The Socialist pattern of society we aim at in India, must needs provide for growth both of the individual and of the society. This means co-existence of the private and the public sectors. The two however stand at opposite poles. If they are not to engage each other in the battle of Kurukshetra afresh, an active buffer in between is an inevitable must. The cooperative sector grows as the logical corollary if socialism is to be a reality and not a lollipop slogan for children. Socialist pattern of society in India will therefore demand three sectors in the economy—the private at one end, the public at the other and a growing sector of cooperatives as a dominant balancing force in between.

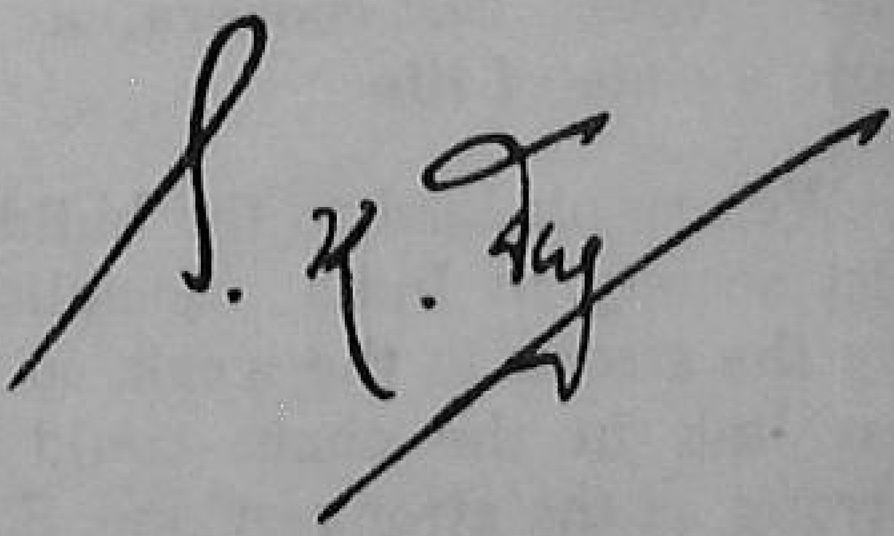
This message was given to the All India Cooperative Union on the eve of the All India Cooperative Week that was celebrated throughout the country from November 5 to November 11, 1960.

The cooperative sector in India must necessarily begin to think in new dimensions. There will be service cooperatives in villages. Cooperatives have largely been dealing with credit till now. They have been more or less miniature village banks, rather poor ones even at that. Cooperative credit has to grow manifold and its operation much more efficient before it can claim to be adequate. Nevertheless, credit should progressively be a minor factor in cooperation if cooperation is to play the historic role demanded of it. Service cooperative should in the new context grow to be the mother economic institution of the village providing credit, supplies of commodities in acutely short supply like seeds, fertilisers, iron and steel, cement, kerosene, sugar, etc. and services of both skill and the machine. It should also provide insecticides with equipment and the services of the specialist. It should federate progressively into higher tiers at Block, District, State and National levels. The apex institutions should deal respectively with credit, marketing, consumer goods, training and education and other specialities as specialisation grows with the progress of time.

There should then be special cooperatives of varying types with their respective tiers of apex institutions, dealing with the requirements of the artisans, the poultry and fishery men, cattle breeders, transport, labour and multiple other services which are the integral features of the community picture for "Tomorrow". The marginal landholders and the landless in our villages have no substantive means of livelihood. They must be combined under a structural association in which the group can acquire the strength which members lack individually. Thus alone can they be helped to grow into an agro-industrial community doing efficient and intensive agriculture on the one hand, village and cottage industries allied to agriculture on the other. It is only thereafter that the exploitation of the weak by the strong can begin to ease and a serious effort can be initiated to eradicate the long legacy of inequity. Cooperative joint farming must develop as an essential feature in every village community. There should likewise be the processing of agricultural produce through mechanised tools of production. All these again must federate from the village up to the centre.

The Government of India with the new Ministry of Cooperation has by now gone through nearly two years of teething pains. Government is determined to promote a new look in cooperation. It will help the honest. It will try to keep the dishonest at arm's length. It will work for self-reliance in cooperative institutions from the ground up to the centre. The movement should have leadership which will lead in the interest of the community. The ivory tower leadership in cooperation should be a banned commodity. Sweet-tongued exploitation by crafty ones for purposes—economic or political—should begin to recede as incidents of a sordid past. All these are possible only when the masses enrolled as members begin to understand that cooperation is but an extension of the concept of the joint family, that "Something for nothing" is a myth, that cooperation means first obligation if we are to build a Sahakari Samaj instead of the Sarkari Darbar or the Sahukar Bazaar. I pray, may wisdom dawn on us as a people. May we learn that black magic and the black magician should if at all be left for the carnival without.

The foregoing represents the substance I have offered to myself for heart-searching during the forthcoming cooperative week. I commend this likewise to comrades and fellow-workers.



GLIMPSES OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

VIDUR

THE PANCHAYATI RAJ pattern is coming up throughout the country. Looking at the various stages of its development in different States, the progress seems to be quite encouraging. It was Rajasthan that first launched the scheme on October 2, last year. Andhra Pradesh came close on its heels and is going ahead, overcoming the initial teething troubles. Again, on October 2 this year, Madras has set in motion the first phase of Panchayati Raj by creating Panchayat Union Councils in 75 Blocks. Mysore and Assam are shortly putting the scheme in operation. Orissa has enacted legislation and is likely to implement the scheme soon. Necessary legislation has been introduced in Madhya Pradesh and Punjab as well. Uttar Pradesh has already passed the Kshetra Samitis and Zila Parishads Act. In Kerala, powers have already been transferred to 146 Panchayats to plan and implement the development programmes within the framework of the existing laws. Legislation will be introduced in the near future. Bihar too, has its plans ready to introduce necessary legislation. The newly created States of Maharashtra and Gujerat have appointed committees to examine the implementation of Panchayati Raj. The Maharashtra Government recently convened a Seminar on democratic decentralisation in which representatives of Government, Local Bodies and Voluntary Organisations took part and exchanged their thoughts and views. The Seminar proved very enlightening and useful in as much as it helped the Maharashtra Government to formulate its own views on the subject. Bengal alone, it seems, is sitting still on the fence. But sooner or later, it is also bound to move forward and march in step with the rest of the States.

PROGRESS IN RAJASTHAN

Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan has been nearly one year old. Recently a study Team of the Congress Party in Parliament visited Rajasthan to study the impact of the Panchayati Raj. The Team found that the scheme was proceeding on right lines and that the standard of performance by the Panchayats in various fields of developmental activities was appreciable. The Team also felt that the relations between the officials and the elected representatives were, on the whole, based on mutual understanding and cooperation, and that both were equally anxious to make the scheme a success. The Team will next visit Andhra Pradesh and give a report of its impressions of the working of Panchayats there.

PROMOTING AGRICULTURE

Quite encouraging reports have come from various States of Panchayats playing a leading role in the promotion of agriculture. The lesson regarding utility of green manure in increasing soil fertility seems to have gone well in the minds of the farmers in Madras, Bihar and Orissa. In these States, cultivators grow 'Dhaincha' or other green manure seeds on the periphery of their fields and have become not only self-sufficient in their requirements of the seed but are selling it in the market. After Maharashtra, Rajasthan has launched a State-wide drive of bunding, known as 'Medhbundi'. A total of 28,850 acres has been covered under the operation. Rakhi village in Siwana Panchayat Samiti has won a shield and a prize of Rs. 2,000 for doing the best 'medhbundi' in the State. The reports received from various Panchayat Samities in Rajasthan speak of the keen interest that they are taking in promoting agricultural production. Fatehpur Panchayat Samiti has earmarked a sum of Rs. 13,000 for minor irrigation works and another sum of Rs. 18,000 for grow more food operations. The Rai Singh Nagar Panchayat Samiti has in one of its meetings decided to raise food production by 10% during 1960-61 and has accordingly chalked out an ambitious programme to achieve the goal. Similarly, Jayal Panchayat Samiti has decided to advance loans up to Rs. 33,000 to progressive farmers and service cooperatives. In Andhra Pradesh the Zila Parishads and Panchayat Samities are taking over

charge of 58,500 minor irrigation works which uptill now were maintained by the Government. The States of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Gujerat have entrusted the work of plant protection to village Panchayats and Cooperatives.

LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS

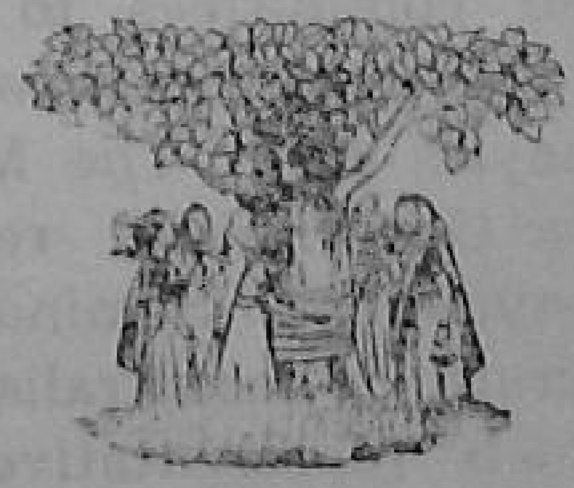
The Panchayats are proving very helpful in mobilising voluntary contributions from beneficiaries for the execution of various projects. It has been made clear in a recent circular issued by the Union Ministry of Community Development that it will be incorrect to treat any contribution made by the Panchayats from out of funds received from the Panchayat samiti, Zila Parishad or the Government as local contribution. The Panchayats have, therefore, to raise their quota of voluntary contributions from their own resources including taxes levied by them. Report has been received that over 600 farmers from a dozen villages of the Paramkudi and Mudukula Taluks have undertaken a 12-day self-help project to desilt 12 miles of the 30-mile Koothangal irrigation channel which owing to neglect over the last 50 years had become useless. The channel when ready would supply water to 50 tanks and irrigate over 10,000 acres. In Rajasthan, Begoon Panchayat Samiti organised the construction of a 2-mile long road through 'Shramdan'. The Antarim Zila Parishad, Tehri in U.P. expects each family in the district to offer 12 day's voluntary labour for the completion of various works. It is planned to dig 241 miles of irrigation channels and 311 reservoirs.

PANCHAYAT RESOURCES

In order that the Panchayats might play their destined role efficiently and with confidence, it is necessary that they should have adequate resources of their own. The State Government in Madhya Pradesh has made up its mind to entrust the work of collection of land revenue to the Panchayats from next year. The Panchayats would be allowed to keep a certain percentage of the collected revenue to meet their expenditure on various projects. A similar scheme is being considered by Rajasthan Government which has already allotted 3 acres of land to each Panchayat for purposes of growing fruits and vegetables in irrigated areas, and fuel trees in unirrigated areas to provide a part of the resources required by them. Jhalra Patan Panchayat Samiti in Rajasthan has gone ahead levying taxes varying from Rs. 12 to Rs. 200 annually on important trades and industries.

PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS

The Punjab and Rajasthan States are at present in the grip of Panchayat elections. In the Punjab, elections to 14,000 Gram Panchayats will commence in the last week of November and will be completed by December 15. In Rajasthan, the reorganisation of Panchayats is under way so that hereafter each Panchayat will cover a population of not more than 2,000. Their number will go up from 3,200 to 7,400. In view of the fact that the coming Panchayat elections will have a great impact on the next General elections, the various political parties are attaching extraordinary importance to these elections. From all accounts received so far, it appears unlikely that the villagers will give up the caste basis of fighting the elections. Even political party affiliations will not cut much ice. It is the personalities that would matter. Under these circumstances, the best thing would be to follow the advice given by Shri Shriman Narayan, Member of the Planning Commission that, "all members should enter into some kind of a gentleman's agreement to keep village Panchayats, Block Samitis, and Zila Parishads out of the pale of party politics". Efforts should be made to have as many unanimous elections as possible in order to avoid the conflict and bitterness resulting from keenly contested elections. The Government could perhaps encourage this by declaring that Panchayats elected unanimously would get preference in grants from the State Exchequer."



LETTERS

A Useful Suggestion

Sir,

It is generally the practice in this State that cow dung is used for composting only during the four Monsoon months. For the remaining eight months the cow dung is utilized for 'Uplas' used for fuel by the villagers all the year round. Of course there are other fuel sources also which are used by the villager, such as sticks from Arhar, cotton etc. But apparently these sources are not sufficient to meet his needs. In my opinion the use of soft coke in some distant future, is utterly impracticable.

Let me suggest an alternative which in my opinion is workable. Babul trees grow extensively in this part of the country. Often it grows without being planted by the cultivator. I think that if individual cultivators take to Babul growing in accordance with their fuel needs, the complicated problem of wastage of compost resources will vanish. I have had some experience of this programme during the last Rabi and Kharif campaigns. I do not claim that I have solved the problem but I certainly think the idea is catching on and may soon show some results.

Yours etc.
H. K. Lala
B.D.O.

5-10-60
Stage I Block, Atrauli,
Aligarh, U.P.

Change of Designation

Sir,

There have been repeated suggestions in these columns over the change of designation of the Gram Sevak or the Village Level Worker. Many of your correspondents have suggested various changes in the designation of this multi-purpose extension worker.

There must be a definite principle in choosing the designations of personnel in relation to the range and nature of their work. When the head of a block is called a Block Development Officer, and a subject matter specialist an 'Extension Officer', it is not understood why an employee is called a V.L.W. or a Gram Sevak. In principle every incumbent in government service is a worker and a *sevak* of the people. There is no non-worker. This term 'WORKER' can very well be applied and added to every designation in the C.D. Programme at higher levels.

It is surprising that in this age when we are endeavouring to create a classless society, we are intentionally or unintentionally trying to create two distinct castes,—one of workers and the other of officers and others.

There is magic in words. Words have their own currency of value, class and place. Somehow the designation Gram Sevak and Village Level Worker are not pleasant. We find in them something narrow, something belittling. That is due to the literal interpretation of the names and people's attitude towards them.

A V.L.W.'s work is peculiar and it is unlike that of other government servants. His relation and acquaintance with the masses, his individuality, initiative and intelligence speak and stand for the confidence and faith of the people in him. He goes to the villagers with a service motto. No power. He cannot coerce or threaten people to do this or that. His only means is moral persuasion. The nature of his work calls for self-respect, and dignity. The designation has something to do with one's position and dignity. I think the present designation of this primary functionary is arbitrary and it is not in keeping with others in the C.D. Programme.

Frankly speaking, there is universal dislike for these designations. The designation of the V.L.W. should be changed into a befitting one that does justice to the nature of work carried out by him as a social and extension functionary. It would be appreciated if this so-called 'friend, philosopher and guide' is redesignated an "Extension Organiser". This is preferable and it comprehends the nature of work of a Village Level Worker. This will give him the necessary respect and dignity.

Yours etc.
E. Desingu Setty
V.L.W.

22-9-60
Chowdepalle Block,
Dist. Chittoor,
Andhra Pradesh.

COMMUNITY ON THE MOVE

A MODEL VILLAGE

NARSIMNAPURAM is one of the few villages selected by the Andhra Pradesh Government under their pilot project scheme for model villages. At present repairs of the tanks are being carried out in this village. Tanning has been newly introduced here. An Oil Ghani has been installed for the use of the villagers. Co-operative Farming is also under active implementation. A sluice has been newly built to get water from "Sagilor" river to the tank of this village. Trees useful for shade and manurial purposes are being planted on both sides of the road.

HUMMING WITH ACTIVITY

TEKMATLA, situated at a distance of 8 miles from Suryapet on Hyderabad-Masulipatam National Highway is a small village of 460 families. It has got all the institutions and activities that a model village would like to have. It has an active panchayat looking after the welfare of the village. It has undertaken street lighting after having completed pavements of all the streets in the village. There is an Artificial Insemination centre which is playing its part in improving the breed of the cattle in and around the village. The cattle-shed for this centre was got built by the Panchayat from its own funds. A rural credit Co-operative Society with an authorised capital of Rs. 50,000 advances various types of loans required by the farmers. It will soon be turned into a service cooperative catering to the requirements of seeds and fertilisers of the farmers. There is also a co-operative Grain Bank which has a paid up share capital of 67 kandis,—the borrowing power being four times the share capital. It is located in its own building constructed at a cost of Rs. 6,400. A school building having 4 rooms has been built to house the Junior Basic School. One Adult literacy class is being conducted with the help of Zila Parishad funds. There is also a children's park for which the equipment was supplied from the Block funds.

ORNAMENTS DONATED TO BUILD SCHOOL

INDIAN women are excessively fond of their jewellery as it often represents their entire fortune. But some 40 women of Nihalabad, a village in the Punjab, have voluntarily donated all their gold and silver ornaments for setting up a girls' school. The villagers have already constructed a tank at a cost of Rs. 40,000 of which Rs. 30,000 had been collected through individual contributions from the people of the village and Rs. 10,000 received from the Bharat Sevak Samaj. The village is known for its exemplary sanitation and cleanliness.

CONCERTED EFFORTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

NANGAL SIROHI, a village in the Punjab, is making concerted efforts for its betterment. Construction of a middle school and a veterinary centre has begun with *shramdan* and a sum of Rs. 15,000 has been collected through voluntary donations.

TANK THROUGH SHRAMDAN

PEOPLE of Palhagaon, in the Punjab have resolved to turn a pond into a pucca tank through *shramdan*. The pond measures some 1,000 sq. ft. Besides *shramdan*, people are also donating money for the purchase of building material.

EVERY CHILD GOES TO SCHOOL

THE SANWAR village under Rajasmand Panchayat Samiti of Rajasthan State has set up an example worth following. There is a primary school in the village in which some 56 boys and three girls were being educated. The Panchayat organised a survey of the village. It was found that there were 14 boys and 30 girls who were not attending the school. So, the Panchayat Samiti made an earnest appeal to the villagers to send these boys and girls to school which they did. Now there is not a single child of school-going age in the village, who does not go to school.

VILLAGERS BUILD A ROAD

PANDOLI is a small village with a population of 311 souls situated at a little distance from the Poona-Purandar Road in Maharashtra State. This tiny village has literally found its own way to its progress. For the last three months men, women and even children of this village have worked regularly to lay a four-and-a-half-mile long road. The road is now open for jeep and bullock-carts. This will provide to 5,000 people of 10 nearby villages access to the Poona-Purandar road easily and in all seasons.

ALL ROUND DEVELOPMENT

ANANGPUR village in District Gurgaon in the Punjab is these days astir with public activities in various fields. An approach road to the village is under construction. The Primary school has been upgraded to the Middle standard. A 'Balwadi' is being run for the benefit of small children. A cooperative society was recently organised to look after the economic activities. A women's cooperative society has also been set up. A women's craft centre is being run to teach embroidery, knitting, and sewing to the village women. Illegal distillation of liquor has been stopped altogether. The village will soon get electricity. It has now got the facility of daily delivery of post. It is understood that the *Gram-sahyog Samaj* has helped a good deal in the mobilisation of these activities.

LONI INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

LONI VILLAGE in Uttar Pradesh, eleven miles from Delhi is not only the Head Quarters of a Community Development Block but the venue of an industrial estate for the development of cottage and small scale industries. Construction of buildings for eighteen industrial units has already been completed in a plot of 12½ acres of land. Another plot of 12½ acres has also been provided for the construction of industrial units. All these units have already been allotted to people for different industries like wire nails, bullock and shoe nails, deisel engines, oil expellers, door fittings, steel parts, sanitary fittings, steel furniture, conduit pipes, barbed wire, agricultural implements and tin containers. Another private industrial estate in the Block on a plot of 250 acres of land has been sanctioned under the Ghaziabad Master Plan and plots have been demarcated for the setting up of industrial units. The industries in the estate will get the usual facilities for procuring raw material, including imported goods, getting machinery on hire-purchase basis, and loans for the construction of factory sheds, etc. In addition, in the Block itself a cluster centre is working for the training of artisans in tin-smithy, carpentry, leather goods, tailoring, embroidery and knitting for ladies. For providing power connection, work has already been taken in hand. A number of housing colonies are also springing up round the Block Headquarters for residential purposes.

NEW COLONY FOR WEAVERS

A WEAVERS' COLONY is rapidly springing up at Sujangarh, a business centre in Churu district in Rajasthan. About 50 families will be accommodated in the newly constructed houses with all modern amenities. An area of 1,31,000 sq. feet has already been acquired and the houses have come upto the plinth level. There will be a 12 feet wide pucca road around the colony which would cost about Rs. 1.80 lakhs. On completion of the houses, power looms will be provided to the Weavers' co-operative society which is already functioning with a membership of 150 weavers. An Industrial Estate is also proposed to be established adjacent to the Weavers' Colony.

VILLAGE LEADERS DISCUSS HEALTH PROBLEMS

UJWA—a small village situated about 12 miles from Delhi, was recently the venue of a two-day camp of village representatives, held to discuss how they and the health authorities can work together to improve health and sanitation in their villages.

The camp was organised as part of a programme to bring the health staff and the village representatives together to discuss practical problems and arrive at useful conclusions. The object was to create better understanding of the needs of the villages on the part of the health authorities and greater awareness on the part of the villagers of their own role in improving standards of health.

The discussions were held at the Ujwa Primary Health Centre in the rural area of the Union Territory of Delhi. Besides the 26 villages covered by the centre, six other villages were represented at the camp by their Pradhans, Up-Pradhans, Sarpanches, Naib Sarpanches and Panchayat Secretaries, as well as doctors and other health staff.

They were joined by experts from Delhi and, quite unexpectedly, a large number of villagers from Ujwa and the nearby area. Such was the interest evinced by the village folk in the discussions at the camp.

The specialists from Delhi spoke of the need to introduce health measures, maternity and child care services, control of the spread of communicable diseases and how the village people could help in this task and the need for family planning. Public health engineers explained to the villagers the details of latrines specially designed for villages.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The village representatives then split up into different groups to discuss each question in detail, with the medical and health people present to clarify technical points. The awareness that their living conditions can be improved to a large extent with the necessary organised effort is reflected in the conclusions reached as a result of the various groups' discussion.

For example, the group which discussed the question of putting up latrines agreed that all houses in the villages should have latrines and while new houses are built provision should be made for latrines. The village authorities should help the house-owners in building the latrines but the house owners will be responsible for maintaining them. The Panchayat should not only enforce cleanliness and see that the house owners maintained the latrines properly but educate them in doing it.

The proposed health committee for each village, it was suggested by another group, should be charged with the responsibility of maintaining hand-pumps for drawing water from wells. The condition of wells should be improved and the group suggested that the engineering department should help in pumping more water from the wells.

FIGHTING DISEASES

The group which discussed the question of people's co-operation in controlling the spread of communicable diseases agreed that panchayats should inform the Primary Health Centre as soon as it was noticed that some epidemic was likely to break out in the villages.

The participants were agreed on the need for proper maternity and child care. The suggestions they made show how keen they were for the safeguard of the health of their women and children. They asked for more facilities for the health staff and suggested that a doctor attending a delivery case should have a transport at his or her disposal.

They also wanted the health committee to organise baby shows, house cleanliness competitions and games to promote the health of the village youngsters. The committee should also help to look after the maintenance of wells and hand-pumps.

FAMILY PLANNING

What may come as a surprise to many was the fact

that during the discussion on the programme of family planning the villagers agreed that families should have a limited number of children and that this would better subserve the welfare of each family. They wanted the proposed health committee to undertake the responsibility of popularising the programme.

Here we can see the interaction of new ideas, modern knowledge and the aspirations of the people. The two-day discussion has once again shown the deep urge in our villages for a better and richer life and the people's receptiveness of new ideas. Once they have seen a programme in action even in a small or limited way, they become aware of its potentialities and would like it to be expanded.

The Ujwa Primary Health Centre which organised the camp is one of hundreds of such centres all over the country. The programme of setting up these units is integrated with the scheme of Community Development and by the end of the Second Plan it is expected that 2,800 primary health centres will be in existence. Together with the expansion of the Community Development programme, primary health units will be established in all development blocks.

SONS OF THE SOIL

Andhra Farmer Achieves Five-fold Increase in Sugarcane Yield

ATTENTION TO details and tending the soil with love and care,—this is the secret of the five-fold increase in sugarcane yield achieved by Yelamanchili Venkatachalam of Andhra Pradesh. It was in 1938 that Venkatachalam of Boddapadu in Krishna District started growing sugarcane, putting two acres under it. He got less than 25 tons of cane per acre. Never satisfied with what he got out of his land, he conducted trials on his farm and adopted the methods he found best. With the help of officials of the State Agriculture Department, he tried improved methods of cane cultivation, using better varieties. In 1956-57 he won the first prize in the All-India sugarcane crop competition with a yield of 115 tons.

SECRET OF SUCCESS

And this is the secret of his success: he ploughed the field deep with a tractor in March 1956 the one-acre competition plot from which he reaped the record harvest. The clods were broken and the field ploughed cross-wise six times. A basal dose of 15 cart-loads of well-rotted farmyard manure was added to the field and trenches were opened four feet apart. An improved variety, Co.527 cane was planted.

The first top-dressing was given 45 days after planting with 480 pounds of powdered groundnut cake and 336 pounds of ammonium sulphate. The second top dressing was done in June with 672 pounds of ammonium-sulphate, and 2,464 pounds of powdered groundnut cake applied in the rows. The crop was later earthed up.

GOOD DRAINAGE

Venkatachalam has found by experience that merely heavy application of fertilizers and manures did not give higher yields. According to him, "good drainage is a must for good sugarcane crop, as it results in a better response to manures. The drainage channels, therefore, should be provided along with irrigation channels." Venkatachalam had dug out one drainage channel for every 20 trenches. This facilitated the drainage of excess water, particularly during the heavy rains from June to September. As the crop had a very luxuriant growth in August-September, he propped it up with 2,500 tall bamboos, erecting them at regular intervals all over the field along the trenches, and tied the sugarcane leaves to them the "trash twist method". From November onwards, he irrigated the crop every 18 days till May, '57. When the plot was harvested the same month, the crop had attained a height of 22 feet

(Continued on page 14)

THREE LAYER PLOUGHING

A. SMIRNYAGINA

EVER SINCE man began ploughing the earth, the same thin upper layer of soil has been providing him with food. That layer "wears out" gradually, losing its fertility. Annually broken by the plough the soil is rubbed into dust. But fertile soil must consist of lumps rich in organic matter and not dust. What has man not tried to rebuild the soil into small lumps and make it highly fertile?

LAYER CAKE PLOUGHING

When the earth was allowed to rest and is not sown for some years it becomes fertile again. So vast territories are usually kept fallow and that land becomes waste. But what if, instead of allowing "worn" soil to lie waste, its upper layer were simply made to change places with the lower, subarable layer, which remained unused for centuries? Soviet Professor G. Chikaliky thought this over. He made the experiment of laying the upper layer of soil at the bottom of the furrow, with the middle layer over it and the lowest layer, taken from the bottom of the furrow, on the top. The arable soil thus consisted of three layers, built like a layer cake; as a result, the arable layer became much deeper: 60 to 70 cm. instead of the usualy 20-30 cm.

The subarable layer of soil is naturally much poorer in organic nutrients than the upper layer. But this fresh earth has its own excellent qualities: it is built of small lumps and does not contain either weed seeds or pests and micro-organisms causing plant diseases. If that soil is properly fertilized it will become high yielding, but fertilizers must be placed in all the layers.

Cultivated in this way while the harvest ripens overhead, new wealth is stored in the depths of the arable soil as its lowest layer turns into excellent fallow.

THE THREE-TIER PLOUGH

Is there a plough that can plough the soil in layers? It must certainly be an unusual one. Professor Chikaliky has worked hard on its design and invented a plough whose working parts, or bodies, are arranged in stages each one lying higher than the other, instead of being on the same level. The highest body is the first to dig into the earth. It lifts and turns over the upper layer of soil, laying it at the bottom of the furrow. The second body, placed somewhat lower than the first, then comes into action. It lifts the lower layer of earth, turns it over and lays it on the first. The third and lowest body ploughs the third layer and lays it on top of the first two.

Professor Chikaliky has devoted 25 years to the research of new ploughing technology. His worthy helpmate and co-inventor was his wife, I. Zakhotkina, Master of Agricultural Science. A huge number of experiments (and in agriculture every experiment lasts from sowing to harvesting time), minute study of the fundamentals of fertility, careful study of the work of other scientists and a courageous fight against the opponents of the new theory have led to the inventors' victory.

Ploughing in three layers makes the soil sufficiently friable to make annual ploughing unnecessary, cultivation to a depth of from 10 to 15 cm. being quite sufficient. The soil does not crumble so quickly or lose its texture.

After 6 years the earth is ploughed again to interchange the middle and upper layers. After that seeds will again be sown in renovated soil. After another 6 years the lowest layer, that has been lying fallow for 12 years, must be lifted on the surface, to be replaced at the bottom by the upper layer. This gradual interchanging of layers renovates the oil and continually increases its fertility.

The layer system of agriculture has been tried on collective farm fields where it is yielding excellent results. In southern districts of the

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THIS HAPPENED IN A TRIBAL VILLAGE

M. K. RAO

THE REGION is hilly, the land is barren and the inhabitants primitive. It is the land of Bhils and Bhilalas, the tribals who have inhabited the Vindhya region for centuries. For ages past they have remained unaffected by the march of civilization. They are poor and backward but not devoid of zest for life.

So far the people of this area led a nomadic life isolated form the rest of the world. Agriculture did not find favour with them. The rains that came only washed away the rich top-soil, and cut deep gullies across the surface of the earth. The rain water was never utilized for cultivation. And so the caravan of life of these nomadic tribes went on for generations.

But then came a change. A change that was slow in the beginning, but gained momentum as days passed on. It was the change brought about by the Community Development programme. The first signs of the change were visible in 1953 when the first C.D. Block was inaugurated at Jhabua in the Adivasi inhabited area of Madhya Pradesh. During the last seven years tremendous amount of change has overtaken the land. Progress is noticeable practically in all spheres of rural life.

Irrigation which holds key to agriculture in the area is being tackled with uncommon zeal. Bunds have been constructed across *nullas* to hold back the life-giving water, and pumping sets installed to lift the water to the parched fields. Groundnuts which grow abundantly in the area are being put to commercial use. The Bhils of the village Pilplipada have formed an Industrial Cooperative known as 'Adivasi Tel Utpadak Sahakari Samiti' for crushing oil out of the ground nuts. Wardha Ghanis have been installed for the purpose. Agriculture has become a paying proposition. Fishery and poultry farming have caught the imagination of the people. Tanks which so long were mere pools of mud and slush have been renovated. They now serve as reservoirs for the purpose of irrigation as well as for stocking fingerlings, which in near future, would pay them rich dividends.

A new awakening has dawned upon these unsophisticated tribal people. No more are they scared of the jeep or the white-collar 'Sahibs'. They have become conscious of their felt-needs. They discuss as equals their problems with the Block staff both on the field as well as in Block Development Committee meetings, and offer suggestions wherever necessary.

The programme has strengthened their sense of community feeling. It has kindled their spirit of self-help and mutual help. Take for instance, Shri Somla of village Andharwad. He has purchased a lift-pump from Block Taccavi, and has fitted it to his bullock cart. The idea is something novel. Besides using the pump for himself he shares it with others for mutual benefit.

New ideas have caught on. Modern techniques have been accepted. Industrial cooperatives, better farming societies have sprung up even in remote villages. Kriloskar pumps are now found operating in the deep interior. One may see them working in village Mandli Nathu, 20 miles from the nearest metalled road, where the Bhils have formed a Better Farming Society.

The area is now throbbing with a new life, a new spirit unheard of a decade ago.

Three Layer Ploughing

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USSR where it is applied widely harvests have been doubled or even trebled. The cost of cultivation is 2 or 3 times lower, since there is no need for annual deep ploughing or the destruction of weeds, pests and infectious micro-organisms. The three layer system of cultivation can be applied successfully in orchards, vineyards and shelter belts. This new system of ploughing is an important step forward in the technique of soil cultivation.

HOW TO MAKE BEST USE OF COWDUNG?

VIDUR

(There are several subjects of vital importance in our day-to-day life which outwardly prove baffling and seem to defy solution. No expert advice or ingenuous action by the administrators proves effective. What is to be done in such cases? Would it not be better to talk over the thing between ourselves? Perhaps a solution might emerge as a result of this collective thinking and pooled experience of all our readers and field workers. One such baffling subject is the continuing use of cowdung for fuel purposes rather than compost in spite of numerous efforts having been made to reverse the process. Elsewhere we publish a letter on the subject from a correspondent suggesting a way out by growing Babul trees. We invite all our readers—Pradhans, Sarpanches, panches, B.D.Os, Gram Sevaks and other field workers to participate in this scheme of mutual enlightenment and to help find the solution of the problem. In the present article we publish the views of VIDUR—Editor).

THE UTILITY of Cowdung as manure for enriching the soil has been recognised in India ever since the Vedic era and perhaps long before that since the early Aryans undertook agriculture as a regular vocation. In our own days, every Committee and Commission appointed to go into the causes of the poor state of our agriculture, has rightly laid emphasis on the need for conserving cowdung for compost manure to increase soil fertility. But such recommendations have gone unheeded.

It is estimated that out of 800 million tons of cowdung, as much as 300 million tons is used as fuel annually. If this huge quantity were used as manure this would be equivalent to 4.5 million tons of ammonium sulphate, that is equal to the yearly production of 12 Sindri factories. This would help increase food production by 9 million tons.

BIG QUESTION

The big question arises, why are we permitting this huge wastage? Is it that the action on the part of the Block staff is insufficient? Or is it lack adequate awareness on the part of our peasants? Or is it that they have a genuine difficulty for which we have not been able to find a solution so far?

SECURING FUEL

The last poser seems to pinpoint the real problem. Fuel is a prime necessity of life, and unfortunately there has been increasing shortage of this commodity in the villages. Unless we are able to provide a substitute fuel, the villagers will continue using cowdung cakes for purposes of cooking, boiling milk and smoking 'hookah'. What can be done to secure the substitute fuel? Various suggestions have been made. Firewood trees should be planted on an extensive scale in the common waste lands so that each village becomes self-sufficient in its fuel requirements. The peasants may be encouraged to sow fuel plants along the boundaries separating one field from another, near wells and all available vacant places. Cultivation of crops yielding fuel as a by-product (*e.g.* cotton, hemp, dhaincha, arhar) be encouraged. Some have even suggested that the villages should emulate the cities and towns and use coal as much as possible. Others have placed reliance on electric power and earnestly pleaded for speeding up rural electrification schemes. Each of the above proposals suffers from its own limitations and needs to be thoroughly examined from the point of view of practicability. Also, there is a vast scope for new researches and inventions in this field.

It reminds us of a very earnest and devoted Deputy Commissioner of Gurgaon, Shri F. L. Brayne, who had

(*Continued on page* 14)

NEWS FROM STATES

ANDHRA

As a step towards further decentralisation of the administration in Andhra Pradesh, 58,500 minor irrigation sources, so far maintained by the Government will now be handed over to Zila Parishads and Panchayat Samitis.

The staff required for the maintenance of the irrigation works would be transferred to the Zila Parishads from the Public Works Department of the Government. The transferred personnel would be considered as Government employees even though their emoluments would be paid by the Zila Parishads.

DELHI

Pavement of lanes

During 1959-60, nearly 85,470 sq. yards of lanes were made pucca in all the five development Blocks of Delhi. Besides, twelve new community centres were constructed and 3 repaired during the year at a total cost of 69.510 of which half was contributed by the people and half by the Government.

MADHYA PRADESH

7,000 *Panchayats to be set up.*

The Madhya Pradesh Government has decided to set up 7,000 gram panchayats in the Mahakoshal region by the end of this year and also establish a net-work of gram panchayats throughout the State by the end of the Second Plan.

MAHARASHTRA

Adiwasis to do Coop. Farming

Adiwasis of Lohara, a village four miles from Chanda, on Nagpur-Chanda road, in Maharashtra are forming a cooperative farming society to promote their common economic betterment.

About 170 acres of land recently deforested in Govindpur forest check would be made available to the Adiwasis, who are landless labourers. Government would also give them the usual financial aid.

Two such societies were recently formed and registered, one at Armori and the other at Kelzar. The former was provided 300 acres of land and the latter 712 acres of land.

Two cooperative farming societies, one at Wardha and the other at Majra near Warora are already functioning for the last three years.

PUNJAB

Facilities to Cooperatives

The representatives of cooperatives would be associated with the purchasing section of every department of the Punjab Government to ensure that its policy regarding preferential purchase of goods from co-operatives is fully implemented. The Punjab Co-operative Federation would also be afforded an opportunity to represent its case before the Co-ordination Committee of the Government.

UTTAR PRADESH

Big Shramdan Proposed in Tehri

Each family in the district is expected to offer 12 days' voluntary labour for the success of the third Five-Year Plan drafted by the Antarim Zila Parishad, Tehri in Uttar Pradesh.

The cost of the Works to be completed by shramdan and Government subsidies would be Rs. 1,32,28,724.

It is planned to dig 241 miles of irrigation channels and 311 reservoirs.

News from the Centre

Farmer's Bank

A proposal for the setting up of a Farmers' Bank, to supplement the existing arrangements for the supply of institutional finance for agriculture, sponsored on behalf of the Bharat Krishak Samaj, is under the consideration of Government.

Local Development Works in Third Plan

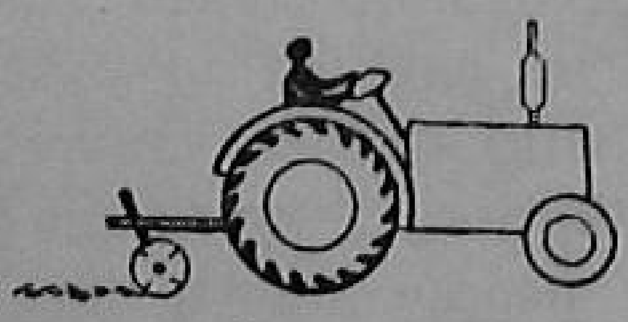
A sum of Rs. 50 crores has been provided in the Third Plan for certain basic amenities in rural areas such as supply of drinking water, link roads in villages and the village school buildings. Under this programme, each village is to be enabled to provide itself with all these amenities, contribution being made by local people mainly in the

form of labour and, to the extent possible, in the form of money. This new programme is intended to be carried out in all rural areas. Till all the villages are covered by the Community Development Programme, it is proposed that a relatively large proportion of the funds may be reserved by the State Governments for backward areas, regions not covered by the Community Development Programme.

Village Industries in C.D. Blocks

Long-term measures initiated to facilitate the growth of new industries in the Community Development Blocks include the establishment of 26 Pilot Projects. It is proposed to establish small industrial estates in pilot projects and rural industrial estates in C.D. Blocks. These projects will help the Ministry of Commerce and industry in carrying out assessment of the industrial potential of the pilot areas and other selected areas for drawing up development plans.

Measures also include the establishment of industrial extension service through the various Small Industries Institutes of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; preparation and making available model schemes; rural electrification; and establishment of training facilities etc.



Andhra Farmer Achieves Five-fold Increase in Sugarcane Yield

(*Continued from page* 9)

and yielded 115 tons. He bettered his own record in the next year with a yield of 116 tons. The filter-point well on his farm is a boon. Not only he irrigates his field with the water from this well but gets more than Rs. 2,000 per year by supplying surplus water to his neighbours. The message of Yelamanchili Venkatachalam is spreading fast. Hundreds of farmers all over the countryside are gradually adopting improved methods of cultivation to extract the maximum out of the good earth.

How to Make Best Use of Cowdung ?

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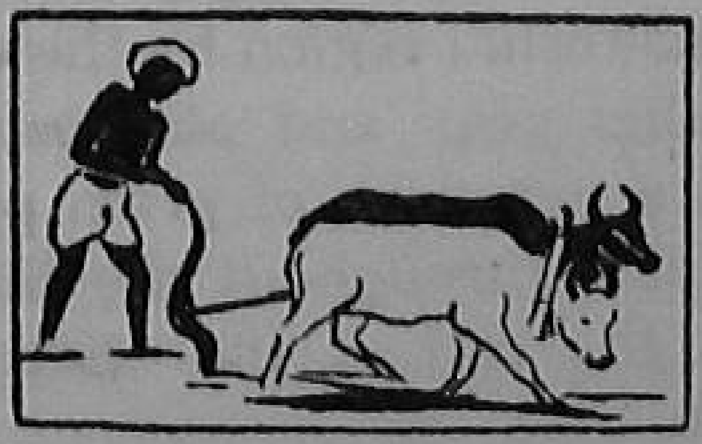
identified himself so much with the question that he hit upon a simple device of a haybox in which boiled milk could be kept warm for several hours. The attempt aimed at eliminating or reducing the process of burning of cowdung cakes to keep the milk warm.

COWDUNG GAS PLANT

Recently, an apparatus known as 'Cowdung Gas Plant' has been tried. It is a promising experiment, in as much as it seeks to supply fuel as well as manure. The dung is, in the first instance, fermented so as to yield a sufficient quantity of combustible gas which can be used for cooking and lighting purposes by the villagers. The residue is still available for use as manure. This has been tried on experimental basis in some villages. We would like to learn more of this experience and would urge upon the experts to work up its economics. It is yet to be decided which is more economical—to set up the plant on individual or on community basis. This is a matter on which decision should brook no delay. Have'nt we already paid for rather too heavily for our inability to help the farmer to release cowdung for purposes of manure? We would like to share our readers' views on the subject.



Policeman As Gram Sevak —A Novel Experiment

Vishnu Dutt

"POLICEMAN is a policeman and a Gram Sevak a Gram Sevak. The twain shall never meet",—thus will argue the critic. But if you want to see the Policeman at his best, go and meet him in Mehsana District in Gujerat where he is playing the role of a Gram Sevak too. Here the villagers are fast losing the dread of the Policeman. The elders look upon him as their helper and benefactor. And for children, he commands the popularity of Santa Claus.

PUNITIVE METHOD INEFFECTIVE

The hundred villages of Mehsana district are largely inhabited by the Thakerdas, an ex-criminal tribe. Deterrent punitive measures had failed to reform these people. On the other hand, they became confirmed criminals. They developed the technique of evading law with impunity. They helped each other in the concealment or disposal of stolen property. They never gave information leading to the arrest of a member of their community. Thus the might of law failed to mould them into good citizens.

POLICE ADOPT VILLAGES

It was but proper that the Police authorities turned their attention towards reforming the Thakerdas by improving their social and economic condition. The Community Development Programme had been in action in the district for some time past but this did not produce the desired results. It is now recognised on all hands that the schemes under the C.D. programme have benefited the well-to-do section comparatively more than the others. The Thakerdas being a backward community failed to reap any appreciable advantage under this Programme. The Police authorities, evolved their own plan of action in consultation with the Community Development and other beneficent Departments working in the district. The collector of the district took special interest in the project. In order that concentrated and personal interest might be bestowed on the inhabitants, it was decided that one police official should adopt two to four villages and serve as a Gram Sevak for purposes of having intimate contacts with the villagers, understanding their problems and initiating activities aimed at their welfare and prosperity.

RIGHT APPROACH

The success of the scheme depended to a large extent on the right approach that the police officials brought to bear on their relationship with the villagers. Consequently much thought was given to this subject and care was taken to ensure that the police official shed off the old mentality of superiority and bossing over the people. He was expected to earn the confidence and goodwill of the people by partaking in their joys and sorrows and by trying to remove their day-to-day difficulties. He was to become their "friend, philosopher and guide". At the same time, it was made clear that the imbibing of the new spirit of service and brotherhood should not make him oblivious of his primary duties as the custodian of law and order. In order to appease people, he was required not to connive at any violation of law. He should not show any mercy and act strictly in accordance with law. The new pattern was not meant to replace the normal procedures of Police surveillance, preventive action, and prosecution in the court of law, rather to supplement the same. The criminals should in no circumstances be allowed to get away with the feeling that the Police had become soft, inalert, inattentive or inactive. On the other hand, the police officer was expected to undertake more intensive touring and to apply the normal practices more thoroughly and effectively. In short, he was to be an embodiment of service as well as firmness.

ENCOURAGING RESULTS

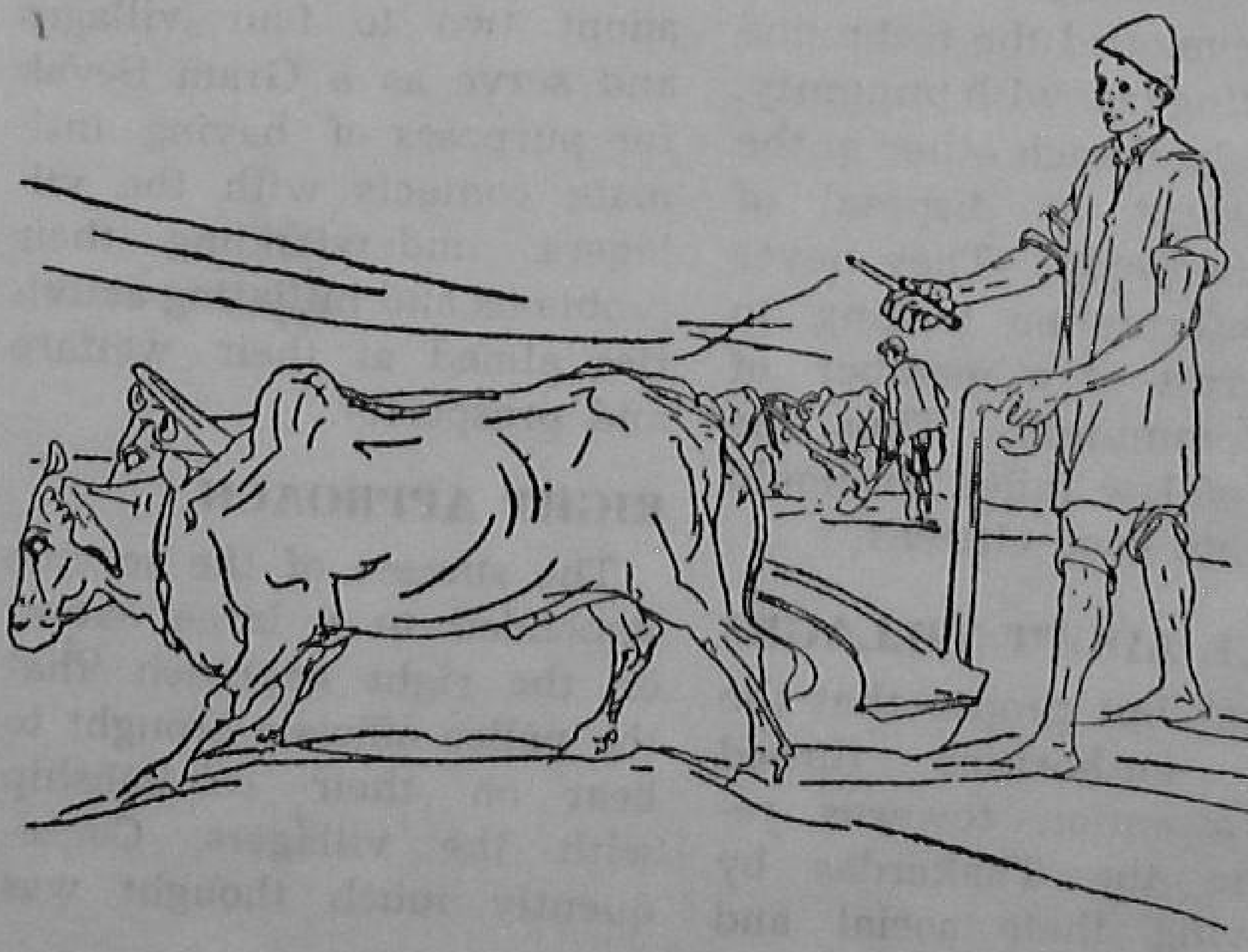
The scheme has now been in operation for one year and a half only. Although this is too short a period for carrying out an assessment of the sociological and economic changes brought about, yet the results already achieved are very encouraging, and point to a bright future for the scheme.

The police officials having increased the frequency of their visits to the adopted villages, have come to know the people, their habits, requirements and problems more fully and intimately. By exercising their wholesome influence, they have helped the villagers to settle their disputes, solve domestic problems and have thus brought much-needed comfort and solace to many a home. These little acts of service have earned for them a lot of good-will and confidence. Realising that lack of means of livelihood is the greatest incentive to crime, efforts have been made to tackle the problem of unemployment on top priority basis. So far, the Thakerdas had kept themselves scrupulously away from the Army. But now a special recruitment drive was arranged to which the response has been very encouraging. In order to decrease the pressure on land, other means of livelihood have been created and provided for. In village Sunsar, the most notorious village in the district, a Co-operative Society has been formed which undertakes the digging of wells, installation of village Water Supply Scheme, and construction of approach roads. Similar societies are working in many other villages.

The tempo of development work has received a great fillip in these villages. The police has been instrumental in focussing the attention of all the Development departments to the imperative need of concentrating attention on welfare and development activities in these villages. Thus a primary school in the village of Rampur is the result of a Policeman's suggestion to the villagers to offer their voluntary contribution. In village Dabhi, the construction of a five-roomed school building, a Panchayat-ghar, a library and installation of two tubewells are largely the result of the efforts of the "foster father" of this village.

CHANGE OF HEART

As expected, the results of these constructive activities have been very wholesome. Many of the erstwhile criminals and bad characters have been reformed and have vowed to lead an honest life. The ex-criminal tribesmen of Saij have voluntarily pledged to turn over a new leaf. They have set up a service cooperative and a cottage weavers' training school. The Service Cooperative in Sansar has got 21 ex-convicts and "history-sheeters" as its members. Last year's figures show that crime has fallen by about 30% in the adopted villages. This is a splendid achievement of which any police could be proud. The Mehsana Scheme may well serve to be an object lesson in reorienting our approach to crime and portraying the picture of an ideal Police Officer in Welfare State. It successfully demonstrates the supplementary role of the Developmental activity and the Punitive action and that the latter comes into play only if and when there is a vacuum left by the former.



The Director of Industries, Madhya Pradesh inaugurating the "Adivasi Tel Utpadak Sahakari Samiti" in the village Pilplipada in Stage II Block, Jhabua (for details see the article "This Happened in a Tribal Village" on page 11)

A view of a bund across a nallah, near village Mandli Nathu in Stage II Block, Jhabua. Construction of the bund has made lift irrigation possible in this barren and hilly area. The bund now commands an irrigated area of 125 acres. The Bhils of Mandli Nathu have formed a Better Farming Society. (For details see the article "This Happened in a Tribal village" on page 11).

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